THE BIRDS OF POINT PELEE.

BY P. A. TAVERNER AND B. H. SWALES.

(Continued from page 53.)

32. **Botaurus lentiginosus*.—American Bittern.

An abundant summer resident, remaining until late in the fall. Gardner reported seeing a bird on the marsh Jan. 25 and Feb. 13, 1907. Undoubtedly breeds commonly.

33. **Ardetta exilis*,—Least Bittern.

Common summer resident on the marshes, especially near the base along the dyke, where the wetness and softness of the muddy bottom is evidently to its liking. Migration dates on this species, especially in the fall, are hard to get. The local name for the bird on the Point is "Strike-fire," and under that name it was reported by the shooters Sept. 2, 1907, which gives us our latest date.

34. **Ardea herodias*.—Great Blue Heron.

A common summer resident. About four o'clock in the afternoons, both in spring and fall, numbers of them can be seen winging their way from the marshes, where they have been spending the day, to the stakes of the pound nets off shore on either side of the Point. There they balance themselves awkwardly on the swaying ropes, or stand statuesquely on top of the stakes and take toll of the contents of the nets. Sometimes nearly a dozen can thus be seen about one net, and the fishermen regard the fish so taken as no small item. One evening Taverner witnessed them making their way out to their usual stand with the greatest difficulty, against a heavy head wind. Several seemed unable to make it, and returned to content themselves with what they could find along the shore. The wind at this time was blowing about sixteen miles an hour. It was evident that such a wind is about the limit, that the early fall birds at any rate can make head against. In the early morning, Great Blue Heron tracks can be seen all over the sand of the eastern beach, though we have seen but few there during the daylight hours. So it seems that many come to the shores in the night to feed. In early September we have seen them rise up from the marsh in the daytime, when disturbed by shooters, in flocks numbering a dozen or more individuals.

35. *Ardea cerulea?*—Little Blue Heron.

Sept. 22, 1906, we examined a white heron in the possession of Mr. John Conover, then of Leamington. The bird, an old mounted one, was situated so as to be difficult of examination, but as far as we could see it was pure white, without plumes and the legs were painted green. We therefore enter it under this heading with a question

mark, as not being absolutely identified. It was taken, according to the owner, by a Mr. Dan Goyeau near the base of the Point in September, 1904. See Auk XXIV 139-40.

36. **Butorides virescens*.—Green Heron.

The resident hunters call this bird the "Blue Bittern" and seem to be well acquainted with it. It cannot be a very common species or we would have met with it oftener than we have. A great part of the west side of the marsh is well covered with suitable bushes that would form admirable places for them. We have met individuals at various times of the spring and fall and secured one specimen August 30, 1907.

37. **Nycticorax nycticorax navius*.—Black-crowned Night Heron.

Mr. Saunders reports that June 3, 1884, he saw "at least one on the marsh." On the night of Sept. 15, 1906, we heard the hoarse croaks of a bird flying out the Point along the shore that we were certain proceeded from an individual of this species. But it was not until Sept. 2, 1907, that we were able to remove the Night Heron from the hypothetical list when Bert Gardner brought one in that he had killed on the marsh while duck shooting. It was a juvenile bird and is now in the collection of Mr. Taverner. Gardner says that he saw at least a dozen of them. The next day he looked for them again, but was able to find but one, which he was unable to secure.

HYPOTHETICAL.

Some of the old residents tell us of "large white cranes" seen near the base of the Point years ago "as tall as a man." Also of cranes feeding in flocks on plowed fields at an equally early and vague date. These descriptions point very closely to the Whooping and Sandhill Cranes, *Grus americana* and *G. mexicana*. The evidence, however, is not sufficient to admit them formally to the list.

38. *Rallus elegans*.—King Rail.

Observed by Saunders June 6, 1884, and by Klugh and Taverner Sept. 5, 1905. The "Big Virginia Rails" spoken of by the local shooters must, from their description, belong to this species; if so they are much more common than the few above records would lead one to suppose. In fact there is no reason to suppose them less common here than on the neighboring St. Clair Flats, where they are common breeders. Gardner reports one in the marsh, apparently in good condition, on Nov. 30 and Dec. 31, 1906.

39. *Rallus virginianus*.—Virginia Rail.

Observed May 21, 1906, and May 30 and 31, 1907. Our only fall date is furnished by Keays, who noted two Sept. 19, 1901. Within our sphere of operations it has been our experience that the Virginia Rail is nothing like as common as the Sora. It is undoubtedly a reg-

ular breeder and perhaps further careful work in certain portions of the marsh will prove it to be more abundant than our present data leads us to suppose.

40. **Porzana carolina*,—Sora Rail.

A common summer resident and breeder. Sept. 19, 1906, we found certain parts of the marsh alive with them and both juveniles and adults rose readily from the grass. The shooters call it the "Little Rice Bird." Gardner reports that he saw no more after Oct. 9, 1906.

41. **Gallinula galeata*,—Florida Gallinule.

This species, called locally "Rice Bird," is a common summer resident, and without doubt breeds. Our latest record is one reported by Gardner Oct. 9, 1906.

42. **Fulica americana*,—American Coot.

Likely a few breed as we have noted them on all spring visits as late as May 30 (1907), and in the early fall, Sept. 2 (1907). During October their numbers are very largely augmented by the migrants, when large beds of them are to be observed in the center of the ponds, and every little mud hole in the marsh contains several or many.

43. **Philohela minor*,—American Woodcock.

A common migrant and undoubtedly a regular breeder. From the reports of the shooters and our own experience we judge that the number gradually increases the latter end of August until the end of the month, when the vast majority of them leave. We have never found many of them in September, though from August 24 to 31, 1907, they were very common. Sept. 1 they were all gone, and though we stayed until the 6th, no stragglers were seen.

44. **Gallinago delicata*,—Wilson's Snipe.

Reported by the residents to be a common migrant. First fall date, Sept. 19, 1906. Oct. 13 of the same year they were reported very common and the next day along the edges of the Lake Pond we saw about twenty and took several. Gardner reports having seen occasional individuals during the summer months, and a breeding record would not surprise us greatly.

45. **Tringa canutus*,—Knot.

Sept. 15, 1906, on the eastern beach, Taverner secured an immature male Knot. May 30, 1907, he took another, an adult male this time, in very nearly the same place, but on the marsh side of the sand dune. A little later in the day, two more were seen flying by, but were not secured. Both the above birds are in Mr. Taverner's collection numbered 365 and 867 respectively.

46. **Actodromas maculata*,—Pectoral Sandpiper.

Mr. Saunders took this species in September, 1882, and again in the same month of 1900. Taverner took two of three seen on the mud in the marsh near the east base of the Point, Oct. 29, 1905, and we observed the same number in the same place, Oct. 15, 1906. This species does not favor sand beaches as a rule, but is more often found on mud flats.

47. **Actodromus bairdii*,—Baird's Sandpiper.

Mr. Saunders says: "On Sept. 19, 1900, I saw four Baird's Sandpipers on the east beach, of which we got one or two." This remained the sum total of our knowledge of this species on the Point until August 24, 1907, when we found it almost common. Every bunch, nearly, of small waders that we saw contained one or more. We never found them in flocks by themselves, but always a few individuals mixed in with other species. After the 26th they began to thin out with the rest of the waders, and the last was seen August 31. They were easily distinguished from the Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers, when associated with them, by their superior size, and the more general and even suffusion of buffy on the throat and upper breast. In general appearance they seem to be about half way between the Least and Pectoral Sandpipers, though the breast coloration is softer, less streaked and more buffy and general than either. We secured a number of specimens.

48. **Actodromas minutilla*,—Least Sandpiper.

We have noted this little sandpiper much more commonly in the spring than in the fall; indeed, it seems to be one of the earliest fall migrants, arriving in this latitude early in the first week in July, and but a few stragglers remaining after the first of September. Our September dates are all for a few singles seen early in the month, and even when we arrived on the Point, August 24, 1907, there were but few individuals in company with other small waders, and none were seen after the 2d of September. It is always difficult to separate this species from the Semipalmated Sandpiper in life, but when they are both together close attention will reveal the inferior size, redder back and darker breast of the Least. Without doubt this species is a regular and common migrant at both seasons at the Point, as it is at Detroit.

49. **Pelidna alpina sakhalina*,—Red-backed Sandpiper.

Observed by Saunders as late as June 10, 1884, and by us May 13, 1905, when about eleven were seen along the shores of the Lake Pond. May 20, 1906, we saw one, and again another single May 31, 1907. It is a late migrant, both spring and fall, and is likely both regular and common in its occurrence at the Point. We have met it but once in the

fall, Oct. 15, 1906, when about twenty were seen on mud banks in the Lake Pond. Several were taken at this time.

50. **Ereunetes pusillus*.—Semipalmated Sandpiper.

The commonest wader on the beach in the fall. When we arrived on the Point August 24, 1907, we found flocks already there aggregating hundreds. After the 26th their numbers decreased, until after the 30th, when but isolated bunches of from a couple to seven or eight, mingled together with Semipalmated Plover and Sanderling, were met with scattered along the shore. This is about the same numerical condition that we have found on other September trips of the two previous years, and so they continued to our latest dates for the month, Sept. 22, 1906. We saw none Oct. 15 of same year. At Detroit, the Semipalmated Sandpiper arrives in the fall about the last of July and leaves the last of August. It is likely the same at Point Pelee, though as above indicated, a number of individuals linger well towards the end of September. In the spring we have but one good record, Saunders reports it from there June 5, 1884. May 30, 1907, we saw several individuals that we thought were this species, but the conditions of observation were so poor and the chances of mistake so great that we could not be at all certain of our identification. It is likely a late spring migrant here as at Detroit, arriving the latter end of May and departing the first week of June.

51. **Calidris arenaria*.—Sanderling.

It seems evident that the last days of May are the times to look for this beautiful little wader. Saunders found it there May 30, 1884, and again the same date in 1907 it was quite common on the east beach. It has been noted on all September trips, and was very common August 24, 1907, though together with most of the other small waders present then, it much decreased in numbers after the 30th. We saw two as late as Oct. 15 (1906). This is one of the most interesting of the sandpipers. Unlike most of the waders it is frequently seen some distance from the water line and on top of the dunes on the dry sand, though its usual station is just at the water's edge, running forward after each receding wave and nimbly back again just in time to escape being overwhelmed by the next succeeding breaker. They run with great rapidity over the sand and sometimes prefer that method of escaping to flight. At such times it takes a sharp and well sustained pace to walk them down. At times they are absurdly tame, and at one time allowed us to approach within shooting distance and to collect all of a bunch of three, one at a time, the survivors showing not the slightest alarm at the successive reports of a heavy twelve-gauge gun. On the wing, the black and white of their plumage shows up in striking contrast, and when in the bright sunlight they pass over the green water they make a rarely beautiful sight.

We expected to find adults present the latter end of August, but when we arrived at the Point August 24, 1907, all secured were in juvenile plumage. Saunders thought he saw a couple with the reddish breast of the adult bird, but was unable to secure them and no more were noted. It is well known that the older individuals of this species arrive early in the fall and generally depart before the first of the juveniles arrive.

52. **Limosa hæmastica*.—Hudsonian Godwit.

May 13, 1905, Taverner took a high plumaged male Hudsonian Godwit along the strip of clear water that separates the sand dune from the marsh. It stood bunched up under a small bush with its feet just wet with the lapping of the water, uttering a series of short, sharp "cheeps" that first attracted our attention to it. See Auk, XXIII, 535.

53. **Totanus melanoleucus*.—Greater Yellow-legs.

We have seen but two of this species on the Point. Both killed by Gardner on the marsh, Sept. 3 and 14, 1906. The shooters speak enthusiastically of the "big Yellow-legs" they shoot on the marsh in October. No doubt it is a regular and common migrant, though fewer in numbers than the next species.

54. **Totanus flavipes*.—Yellow-legs.

We have only met this species in early September, our earliest date being the 1st, in 1907, and the latest the 19th, in 1906. This gives very little idea of their migrational movement as they arrive at Detroit the second week of July, and by the first of August are present in great flocks. The bulk of them seem to leave about the first of September.

55. **Helodromas solitarius*.—Solitary Sandpiper.

We have met but single individuals of this species on the Point in various September visits, viz. the 11th and 16th, in 1905, and the 6th, in 1907. Saunders also saw one the latter year, August 28. Both the latter were observed in a drainage ditch at the base of the Point. Indeed, Point Pelee is not ground suitable to their tastes at all, and unless some are to be found on the mud banks scattered through the marsh through July and August their occurrence at all is likely accidental.

56. **Tryngites subruficollis*.—Buff-breasted Sandpiper.

August 29, 1907, Taverner took a male at the extreme end of the final sand spit at the end of the Point. It was in company with a small bunch of Semipalmated Sandpipers and Sanderling. It seemed quite tame and was easily secured. It is numbered 924 in the collector's collection.

57. **Actitis macularia*,—Spotted Sandpiper.

A common summer resident and breeder. In June, 1884, Saunders found this species breeding so abundantly on the west shore, "That a short walk was nearly sure to flush one from the nest." Unlike all the other waders that occur on the Point it is at all times of its occurrence as common on the west shore as on the east. We have always found it in numbers in May, but our fall visits have usually been a little late to find more than the stragglers. Sept. 3 to 18, 1905, we saw from two to four daily. In 1906 it was common from the 1st to 3d, but from the 15th to 22d, our later visit, we saw but a couple the first date and one the 21st. There were quite a number present from August 24 to the end of the month, in 1907, but after that it was but stray individuals and couples that were noted. One of these last was caught in the hand by Mr. N. A. Wood, being incapable of sustained flight. On dissection nothing could be discovered to account for such a condition except that it was so abnormally fat that the conclusion was almost forced upon us that it was too fat to fly.

58. *Numenius hudsonicus?*—(Hudsonian?) Curlew.

The residents tell us of the flocks of Curlew that visit the end of the Point in June. Saunders records Curlew in June, 1884; and May 30, 1907, he and Taverner saw a flock of 15 on the east beach. No specimens have been secured and the exact specific designation of the individuals seen remains in doubt. As Saunders says, "The Hudsonian has always been an abundant migrant on a certain few days in the spring, at favored localities, and the other (Long-billed) always rare." Further researches have convinced us that we would be warranted in putting the case in even stronger language than this, and the probability, almost amounting to certainty, is that these are Hudsonian Curlew, but until specimens are actually examined the species must be regarded as hypotheical.

59. **Squatarola squatarola*,—Black-bellied Plover.

A common fall migrant. We have no record of its occurrence in spring. We have found numbers of Black-bellied Plover on the beach and the mud banks of the marsh on all September visits, and took one Oct. 15, 1906. Sept. 15, 1905, five or six were observed with black underparts and the next day Klugh saw a couple more in like plumage; but it was not until August 25, 1907, that any such specimens were taken. For the first three days after this date all seen were in varying stages of the black phase. Then a white-belly was taken and the black ones decreased in numbers until the 29th, when the last one was observed; after which all were white underneath. In common with most of the waders the adults seem to arrive in the fall earlier than the juveniles, and to leave first. It is rare to find a straggling adult after the rest of its kind have left, but the younger birds often linger on for a long time after their elders have gone. This species is

readily distinguished from the Golden Plover in life by its black, instead of gray, axillaries that in flight stand out prominently from the general gray of wings and sides; and the rather prominent white rump that in certain conditions of flight is very noticeable.

60. **Charadrius dominicus*,—American Golden Plover.

We have met the Golden Plover but twice, both times in the fall, Sept. 15, 1905, and Sept. 19, 1906. Gardner reported seeing eight on the marsh Sept. 2, 1907. This completes the record for the Point to date. The shooters tell us that in October great numbers are found on the marsh, and though we can not always tell which of the two large plover are referred to, the time is more in keeping with the habits of the Golden than the Black-bellied, as it seems to be a much later migrant in the fall than the other.

61. **Oxyechus vociferus*,—Killdeer.

The Killdeer is not a common bird on the Point itself, though they seem usually common on the mainland near the base. In our September visits we usually see or hear one or two every day. They seldom alight on the beaches or mingle with the other waders found there. They undoubtedly breed on the cultivated fields at the base.

62. **Egialitis semipalmata*,—Semipalmated Plover.

We have but two or three records for this species in spring. In May, 1884, Saunders met it on the Point, May 20, 1906, three, and May 30, 1907, we saw two. During all fall trips, however, it has been plentiful. Oct. 29, 1905, Taverner took one. All fall birds so far seen or taken have been juveniles with the black of the head and breast replaced with dingy brown. We expected, August 24, 1907, when we arrived at the Point, to find the adults still there, but were mistaken. At Detroit the adults go through about the middle of August and do not stay long. As a rule two weeks covers their sojourn, but it is seen as in other species, that the younger individuals linger much longer than the adults. As a rule they occur on the beaches of the Point in little groups of three or four in company with Semipalmated Sandpipers and Sanderling, and no wader group is complete without one or more.

63. **Egialitis meloda*,—Piping Plover.

No wader is nor could be more daintily pretty than this little species. Its delicate, tasteful coloration, combined with its clear whistled pipe as it flies out over the blue water, and from which it has taken its name, make a rare combination that, together with the smooth beaches upon which it runs, and the adjoining waters reflecting the blue skies overhead, arouses a sentimental interest more lively than any other shore bird is capable of awakening. It is a common summer resident and regular breeder on the east beach. We have found them there on each May visit and usually discovered nests and eggs. The

nest is merely a shallow depression in the sand and is usually placed among the small stones that occur on the top of the dune where the last great storm has washed them. They are inveterate nest builders. May 13, 1905, we counted forty-five nest-like hollows made by one pair of birds. Though the labor is nothing like as great, in point of the number of nests, this bird has the nest-building mania of the Marsh Wrens beaten all hollow. This date we found no eggs, but previously Saunders took them May 30, 1884, and May 24, 1887, and a few days later observed a young bird. May 30, 1907, Saunders found two sets, one of four and the other one. The species leaves early in the fall and is usually gone by the first of September, as before 1907 we never met the species on our fall trips. August 24, however, of that year we found a number mingled with the other small waders on the beaches. All seen then or later were juveniles, as the adults had already gone. The last seen were Sept. 2. Strangely enough Saunders reports that on the occasions of his early visits in 1882 to '87, all breeders seen had the divided breast band of the type form, while of late years all have been attributal to the variety *circumcincta*. We are aware that this subspecies has been discarded by the committee on nomenclature, but it is interesting to note that there has been this change in the type of coloration of the species in this locality in late years. The fall birds taken in 1907, however, all show the divided band; though this is likely the result of juvenility.

64. **Arenaria morinella*.—Ruddy Turnstone.

A regular migrant and likely a more or less common one both spring and fall. Saunders took one June 5, 1884; and May 30, 1907, we noted and took several. In the fall we have met them at various times between August 24, 1907, and Sept. 16, 1906. They were far more common in 1907 than any other fall that we have been on the Point, and for the first few days a couple or so were always to be seen with the larger flocks of other waders. Previous years we had only seen single individuals. They are a little more suspicious and difficult to approach than the other inhabitants of the beach, and it took careful stalking to secure what we did. In life their superior size when mixed in with other waders is not so striking as one would suppose from the written measurements or a comparison of their skins.

65. *Colinus virginianus*.—Bob-white.

Saunders states, "Not very common in 1884, although found nearly to the end of the Point, at least as far as the cultivated lands reached." Personally we have never met it on the Point proper, though that is likely the result of our not working the more cultivated sections. Keays noted but one Sept. 19, 1901, and we flushed a couple on the mainland near the base May 13, 1905. Sept. 20, 1906, Saunders saw ten near the dyke, and August 20, 1907, and Gardner reported a covey of about thirty. The local sportsmen tell us that it

was formerly an abundant bird and that still a few coveys frequent the edges of the clearings. The Quail did not seem to suffer during the rigors of the winter of 1903-04 in this section of Ontario as they did in adjoining localities in Michigan.

EXTINCT.

Bonasa umbellus,—Ruffed Grouse.

Old residents tell us that the Partridge was once a very common game bird on the Point, but now none have been seen for years. This woodland bird cannot stand civilization as the Bob-white does and is now only to be found in the deepest parts of the more extensive woods. There are no such woods on the Point and they are getting scarcer and scarcer in the adjoining country as their sites are being cleared up and made into corn and wheat fields.

EXTINCT.

Melcagris gallopavo.—Wild Turkey.

Formerly the Wild Turkey was exceptionally common in Southern Ontario. Gardner states that they were numerous on the Point in his memory and the last one taken he connects with certain births and marriages and gives the date as about 1878.

EXTINCT.

**Ectopistes migratorius*,—Passenger Pigeon.

The older residents remember the vast flocks of Pigeons that once migrated through the Point. They were still more or less common in 1882, as Saunders says, "In 1882, my stay there extended through the last days of August, and a week or so in September, and during that time we often saw small flocks of Passenger Pigeons, running up to perhaps fifteen or twenty. They would rush up the Point or down, as the case might be, at a speed which was all their own, and which is rarely equaled, to my way of thinking, by any other bird. I have one specimen from that trip, although we shot several. It is a male, labeled August, 1882."

66. *Zenaidura macroura*,—Mourning Dove.

We have never found this a common species though we have met individuals during all our trips in May, September, and October. Gardner reported several that remained throughout the winter of 1906-07, frequenting the vicinity of the barn yards.

67. *Cathartes aura*,—Turkey Vulture.

May 20, 1906, two vultures flew directly over our heads near the end of the Point. It may prove to be a not uncommon species, as we have what seem to be pretty well authenticated reports of a pair that are regular summer residents near Harrow, about fifteen miles west of

the Point and a few miles inland. The birds we saw were flying very low and we had a magnificent view of their wonderful flight.

68. **Circus hudsonicus*,—Marsh Hawk.

A common hawk, and seen almost every day on all our visits, beating slowly over the marsh-lands or soaring over the woods. It was still common Oct. 15, 1906. Gardner observed them during the winter of 1906-07, Dec. 1, Jan. 25, Feb. 13 and 23. As early as March 9 we saw two old blue adults beating over the still frozen marshes and the snow covered meadows.

69.**Accipiter velox*.—Sharp-shinned Hawk.

The most interesting phenomena we have observed at the Point centers about this bird. We have met this species only occasionally on our May trips, but in the fall there is a truly astonishing flight composed almost entirely of juveniles. This flight seems to be a regular annual occurrence and is looked for and expected by the residents. Saunders first saw the flight in 1882 and described it to us in such glowing terms that it sounded like exaggeration. However, on Sept. 10, 1905, we saw for ourselves and only wondered at the restraint that he had used. Since then we observed the same thing in 1906, and our latest reports from Gardner, the middle of September, 1907, advises us that like conditions prevail again. Our earliest Sharp-shin date is August 30, 1907. In 1906 we saw one Sept. 3, and the year previous there were some numbers present on our arrival Sept. 4.

After the coming of the first in the fall their numbers steadily increased until from six to a dozen can be noted in a day, which in most localities would be accounted common. Then there came a day, Sept. 11, 1905, and Sept. 15, 1906, when the morning's tramp found Sharp-shins everywhere. As we walked through the woods their dark forms darted away between the tree trunks at every few steps. Just over the tree tops, a steady stream of them was beating up and down the length of the Point, while in the air they could often be discerned at every height until the highest looked like a mote floating in the light. As concrete illustrations of the number present:—In 1905 we stood in a little open glade and at various times of the day counted from twenty-five to thirty in sight at one time and Saunders writes, "When I saw the flight in 1882 it was probably even greater than in 1905. There were more Sharp-shins than one would suppose were in Ontario, and one day my brother and I stood thirty paces apart, facing each other, with double-barrel, breech-loaders, and for a short time the hawks passed so thick that we had to let some go by unmolested because we could not load fast enough to fire at each as it came." A farmer told us of sitting in his front yard one afternoon and shooting fifty-six without leaving his chair.

Early in the morning of the arrival of the flight there seems to be

some regularity in their movements. First there is a steady stream out the Point, then it flows back again towards the base and then out again. This movement, however, is not very marked and by ten or eleven o'clock it is lost entirely and it is every bird for itself. This great abundance lasted, in 1905, three days, and the next year four, when they gradually began to thin out, though to the latest of our stay (the 22d, in 1906), they still remained more than common, and at least fifty could be observed in a day. All this time there was a steady stream flying across the lake towards the Ohio shore. Near the extreme end of the Point is a wooden observatroy tower built by the U. S. Lake Survey for the purpose of making observations on the changes of the shore contour. It is about fifty feet high, and stands with its base in the red cedar thicket whilst the platform rises well above all surrounding foliage. On this vantage point Saunders and Taverner took their stand the 18th, and with watch in hand counted the Sharp-shins that passed, nearly all within gunshot. From 11:24 to 11:54, 281 passed us, 207 making for the end of the Point and 74 returning, making 133 that started across the lake within half an hour. As far as we could make out without remaining on the spot the whole time this rate was kept up all day and every day of the greatest abundance of the species. The 13th was the last day of the great flight in 1905, but Swales, driving into Leamington, five miles from the base, found them as common the whole way between as they were on the Point itself. As he drove along every field had its quota of hawks and at times every fence post supported one. Even in the business section of Leamington he saw a number.

The hawks were very bold and fearless, dashing by us often so closely that we could feel the wind on our cheek from their wings. Quite often it happened, once three times in one day, that just as we had our guns aimed at a bird we wished to collect, there was a swoop of a dark body, a few choked twitterings from the victim, and our intended specimen was carried off in the talons of a rapacious little freebooter. The effect of this great abundance of hawk life upon the smaller birds and mammals was very marked, and they kept in close covert. The Blue Jay could hardly be made to forsake its grapevines, and when at last forced to do so glided swiftly and silently to the nearest cover, reserving expression of its pent-up feelings until within safe recesses again. The Brown Thrasher and Towhee preferred to slink deeper within their tangle, on our approach, than to seek a new one; and the Red Squirrels overhead hurriedly gathered what nuts they could and scurried away to their hollow trees, refraining from scolding us until safe within their woody fastnesses again. When, however, forced into the open by hunger the first sight of a hawk caused many of the small birds to "freeze" instantly and then they would remain absolutely still until the immediate danger had passed, and in all cases noted such birds were

passed by unseen. Indeed it seems that hawks and, in fact most other birds, recognize life almost entirely by its movement and not by its form and color. A perfectly stationary object is usually regarded as inanimate and we have seen a hawk pass right by a flock of Cedar Waxwings in the top of a dead and bare stub when they thus "froze."

At times the Jays seemed thoroughly to enjoy conditions and delighted to get in the middle of a safe thicket and "jay" their loudest. No sooner was the first note uttered than a hawk was on hand dodging around the retreat in the wildest fashion, while the jay within shrieked with well feigned fear, but apparent delight. In fact the Blue Jay is a canny bird, and though the remains of other species were commonly met with, scattered over the ground around some little knoll or log, we recognized their blue plumage but once. The flicker too, fared well, though subject to constant attack from the ferocious little *Accipiters*. They did not even curb their voices as other birds did and, though frequenting the most exposed dead tree tops, seemed the most care free of any of the birds. Many times we saw a hawk strike at them, but each time just when we thought it was all up with the flicker there was a little scramble to the other side of the trunk and the hawk was sailing away to make another strike. But it was a one-sided game. The flicker had but a circle of a few inches to describe and the hawk one of many yards, and never to our knowledge was the flicker one instant too late.

The loss of life at such times must be immense. We were continually finding the bunches of scattered feathers that marked where some songster had met its end. During the first few days before the heavy flight the cuckoos suffered most severely, but the main body of hawks seem to follow the migrating Olive-backed and Grey-cheeked Thrushes and they formed the staple food supply during the height of the flight, though we recognized Towhees, Red-eyed Vireos, Brown Thrashers, Chipping Sparrows, Wood Pewees, various Warblers, and Catbirds amid the debris.

In spite of all this, however, most of the hawks collected had empty stomachs, likely the well fed ones were those that circled high in the air, while the ones that fell to our guns were the hungry hunters, made bold by their hunger. Nearly, if not quite, all of the birds composing this flight are young of the year. Of the 281 observed from the tower all but two or three of them were positively made out to be in this plumage, while the others were viewed under such conditions of light and distance that no definite determination could be made. All taken were also Juvenile; in fact the only adult we ever took at the Point was one taken Sept. 5, 1907, and before the flight had started.

Most birds migrating from Point Pelee make for Pelee Island that lies in full view out in the lake, but neither the Sharp-shin nor the

other hawks do so. Instead they take a course nearer the Old Dummy Light and well to the east of the island. As far as we could discern their forms with our glasses they followed a straight and undeviating course that would land them on the Ohio shore some four or five miles to the east of the city of Sandusky. It would be most interesting to work this shore at the right season and see just where they do enter American territory.

On the mainland the flight seems to come from the east. Saunders says, "Since then (1882) I find it well known by the farmers that there is a hawk flight (of these birds no doubt) west along the north shore every year." It is certain that it must take a large area of territory to furnish this great number of hawks on migration, and it is an indication of the extent of country drained by this migration route. We have also heard that there is a return flight in spring, some time in April, but we have never seen it and are unable to say what are the species participating in it. It is said, however, that this spring movement is nothing like as great as the fall one, but it is regular and well enough marked to be noted by the farmers and other residents.

Altogether, it will be readily understood that this flight made a great impression upon us all, and as it seems unique, in many of its phases, in the annals of ornithology, it forms one of the most important and interesting memories of Point Pelee.

70. **Accipiter cooperi*.—Cooper's Hawk.

A fairly common hawk, and through all our summer visits we have usually seen a few daily. They do not seem to increase in numbers during the Sharp-shin migration, and the only tendency to a "flight" of this species that we have observed was Oct. 14, 1906, when fifteen were seen or taken. Several were noted May 30 to June 1, but we have no other spring dates, and our earliest fall one is August 28, 1907.

71. **Accipiter atricapillus*.—American Goshawk.

The fall of 1906 was notable for the abundance of Goshawks in certain parts of Ontario, and Point Pelee got its share of them. The first intimation we had of their presence was a large hawk that we could refer to no other species seen October 15 near the end of the Point. It was not until Oct. 21 that our identification received confirmatory evidence when Gardner sent us an adult male, followed by others Oct. 23 to Nov. 14—ten birds in all. Gardner reported them until Jan. 18, when the last one was seen (see Auk XXIV, 1907, p. 142). The flight in this section seemed confined to the Ontario-Michigan boundary and its immediate vicinity on the Canadian side, and there were no reports of any having crossed the lake into Ohio.

72. **Buteo borealis*.—Red-tailed Hawk.

We have never found any of the *Buteos* common at the Point.

Saunders says, "On the occasion of the hawk (Sharp-shin) flight of 1882 one of these was taken and a very few others seen." Keays reports one Sept. 21, 1901. In 1905 we usually saw one a day, but during our September visits of 1906 we saw but one single bird. Gardner sent us one bird Nov. 16 the same year. From August 24 to Sept. 6, 1907, we generally saw from one to three birds daily. We do not think that any Red-tails breed on the Point.

73. **Buteo lineatus.*—Red-shouldered Hawk.

The Red-shouldered Hawk, contrary to what we should expect from our experience here at Detroit, is the rarest of the *Buteos* on the Point. Keays reports one Sept. 19, 1901, and two *Buteos* seen by us Sept. 8, 1905, were probably of this species. Single individuals were noted Sept. 1 and Oct. 14, 1906, and again May 31, 1907. Three or more were seen Sept. 21, 1906, and an immature was presented to us taken about Feb. 28, 1907.

74. **Buteo platypterus.*—Broad-winged Hawk.

This species seems to arrive in the fall, about the last of August, our earliest date being August 26, 1907, but it does not appear in any numbers until the main body comes down with the Sharp-shins. Even then not more than a dozen have been seen at any one time (Sept. 18, 1906). Keays listed but three in September, 1901. Oct. 14, 1906, is our latest date. We have no spring records.

75. *Archibuteo lagopus sancti-johannis.*—American Rough-legged Hawk.

Saunders saw one August 25, 1907, near the end of the Point as it flew by at short range. This is an unusually early record for this section and likely gives no indication as to its migrational dates at the Point. Saunders is very positive as to his identification and it forms our only record. It must, however, undoubtedly occur in late fall and early spring in some numbers. We lack personal experience on the Point at such times.

76. *Haliaetus leucocephalus (alascanus?).*—(Northren?) Bald Eagle.

As no specimens of this species have been taken the exact sub-specific name of the breeding form must remain hypothetical, but in all probability it will prove to be the Northern form. A pair breed annually on the mainland near the base of the Point. May 13, 1905, we noted the nest in a tall tree in a small patch of woods about a mile inland. A magnificent adult with white head and tail was beating about, and with our glasses we could make out the eaglets perched on the rim of the nest. During all our visits we have noted from one to four eagles almost daily. Usually those seen are immatures, but occasionally a fully adult bird flies over. Likely all those noted in early and middle fall are of the same family before men-

tioned. Gardner informs us that they are occasionally seen through the winter. Sept. 18, 1906, we were watching an eagle soaring over the lake, when all at once it lowered and seemed to plow along the surface of the lake for a short way, throwing up a dash of spray on either side, and then rose with something in its talons which it bore away to its perch on a tall tree-top. This is the only time that we ever saw them pick up anything from the lake, though we think they feed quite largely on the dead fish that are washed up on the beach. Oct. 29, 1905, Taverner found the remains of a half grown turkey, at the edge of one of the fields, that had evidently been devoured by some bird of prey. The eagles seem to be the only ones capable of this. Several times during the Sharp-shin flight we noted eagles so pestered by aggressive little *Accipiters* that they were forced to soar away from the vicinity.

77. *Falco peregrinus anatum*,—Duck Hawk.

A regular and not uncommon migrant in the fall, but we have never seen it in spring. All have been sight records, but the peculiar outline and wing action of the Duck Hawk make its identification almost certain when one has had enough experience with the species to become acquainted with its distinguishing traits. We have seen individuals as follows: Sept. 8, 1905, Sept. 19 and 21, 1906, August 28 and 30, 1907. The shooters know it very well and refer to it as that "Big, black, long-winged Hawk," so it must occur in some numbers. Taverner had an interesting sight of one of these birds in action on Lake Muskoka, Ontario. A flock of Blue Jays was passing over the lake when suddenly down swooped a Duck Hawk, into and through their midst, like a dark brown thunderbolt. As he passed he reached to left and right and seemingly at the touch of his talons two lifeless bodies dropped into the lake. Then, while the surviving Jays fled shrieking away, the bold marauder, with a long, circling sweep, returned, and passing, recovered the floating bodies without as much as wetting a toe. The whole strike and return was executed so quickly that it seemed to occupy no more than a couple of seconds' time, and well justified his name of "Bullet Hawk."

78. **Falco columbarius*,—Pigeon Hawk.

Keays saw two Sept. 17, 1901, one of which was taken. May 13, 1905, we saw one as it flew by close to us on the eastern shore. Since then we have noted single individuals Sept. 16, 19 and 21, 1906, and August 31, 1907. Saunders gives an interesting experience he had with this species, which parallels that of Taverner's with the Duck Hawk as described under that species. He says, "We had fired at and wounded a Black-bellied Plover which was flying over Lake Erie. The wounded bird was at once pursued by this falcon. Attaining a height of thirty or forty feet above the plover, who was only five or six feet above the water, the falcon swooped and missed—the plover

dodging. Again he rose and swooped, and again missed. This was repeated perhaps six times, the birds drawing away northeast towards the mainland, when finally the falcon was successful and struck the plover, knocking him into the water. He then rose, and with a careful swoop, picked him up and flapped away to the Point and we saw him no more."

79. *Falco sparverius*.—American Sparrow Hawk.

On the Point proper this is not a common hawk even during migrations, and we do not think that it breeds there, though there is plenty of ground that looks eminently suitable. Bearing in mind that Sparrow Hawk flights have from time to time been reported we have looked for something of the sort here, but so far in vain, and careful questioning of the shooters has elicited no information that points towards its probability. Indeed it seems as if this species avoids the Point on its migrations as we have several times, Sept. 4, 1905, and Sept. 3, 1906, found it more than ordinarily common on the mainland and basal quarter of the Point, while scarce as usual on the outer portions. We have noted them occasionally on all September visits, but rarely more than single individuals, though August 24 to Sept. 6, 1907, a pair hung around the waste clearings near the extremity of the Point and we saw one or both nearly every day.

80. **Pandion haliaetus carolinensis*.—American Osprey.

A not uncommon spring and fall migrant, have not heard of any breeding. Saunders saw a few in September, 1882. We have noted it on the following dates.—Sept. 6, 1905, one; Sept. 16, three; and 18, one; and two Oct. 13, 1906. Received one male from Gardner, taken May 10, 1907, and from August 24 to Sept. 6, 1907, we saw individuals each day. Though eagles are rather plentiful we never saw one molest an Osprey.

81. *Asio accipitrinus*.—Short-eared Owl.

Personally, we have never met this bird on the Point, though the shooters have often referred to the "Marsh Owl" as sometimes very common on the marsh. Their description allows no doubt as to what they refer to. Without doubt this is an occasional winter resident, as in adjoining localities. Gardner reported one Oct. 13, 1906, and as common some time previous to then, and his letters refer to one seen Jan. 18, 1907, so some may remain through the winter.

82. **Otus asio*.—Screech Owl.

Heard commonly on nearly all fall trips and once in May, 1907. In all likelihood a regular breeder. Two have been taken—both in gay phase. Some of our pleasantest memories of Point Pelee are connected with this pretty little bird. As we sat in our tent in the evening, preparing specimens and writing the notes of the day, the soft, gently descending tremulo of its song would reach our ears from the black-

ness of the woods across the road. Occasionally two would be heard answering each other across the dark gulf overhead and the effect was very far from unpleasant. One night one was heard closer than usual and one of us stole out and stealthily followed up the voice. There was an open glade not far away with a lonely, stunted and twisted oak in its center. In this tree the little owl sat and repeated his love song over and over. Shortly it was joined by another and they sang duets in the well known quaver, but to the hearer below came fragments of cooings and gurgles in between such as he never thought an owl could utter. To attempt to set them down in cold print would, if possible, rob them of their delicate beauty and destroy the sentiment. Besides, we could not do it and retain a shadow of our self-respect. The long, loud quaver was, of course, for the whole world to hear, and to it you would be welcome; but the low parts between were as certainly for no other ears than the little grey-tipped ones by his side, and to blazen them forth and caricature them before the world's unsympathetic eye would be the act of a veritable cad. The night may have had something to do with it, the velvety blackness, the starlit sky and the murmuring of the waves on the shore, but taking into consideration all these influencing surroundings we think that few sounds in nature are as sweet as the love song of this little square gentleman in grey with the big yellow eyes whom hardened naturalists call "Screech" Owl.

83. **Bubo virginianus*.—Great Horned Owl.

Not common, though doubtless a regular migrant and winter resident. Sept. 13, 1906, Gardner shot one near his barn. Specimens were sent us from the Point Nov. 13, 1906, and Feb. 23, 1907, and another was noted March 7 and May 31 of the same year. In spite of this late record we have been unable to get any evidence from the residents that it breeds.

84. **Nyctea nyctea*,—Snowy Owl.

Oct. 29, 1905, Taverner chased an early bird down the entire length of the east beach. It was quite tame and several times he got close enough to make out that it was very white with hardly any dark on the breast and but few spots on the wings and back. It did not fly very far on being disturbed, and always chose some small elevation to alight upon, such as a log of drift wood, or other jetsam cast up by the waves. Trees were never so used, though there were several cottonwoods scattered along the way, but any tall stake or fence post was taken whenever available. Its snowy plumage could be seen for miles against the tawny grasses and yellow sand of the beach. No more birds were reported that winter, but Oct. 30, 1906, an almost pure white one was sent to us and another in more ordinary plumage Nov. 7. No more were reported for the remainder of the winter. See Auk XXIV 1907, p. 143.